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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) (A/48/842 and Corr.1). During the course of its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information to the Committee.

2. Paragraphs 1 to 28 of the Secretary-General's report provide the standard information regarding, inter alia, the mandate and activities of ONUSAL, the status of assessed and voluntary contributions, the financial performance report for the period 1 June to 30 November 1993, cost estimates for the period 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994 and for the liquidation of the mission and the disposition of assets of ONUSAL and the observations of the Secretary-General.

3. As indicated in paragraph 11 of the report, by its resolution 47/234 of 14 September 1993, the General Assembly appropriated $18 million gross ($16,324,000 net) for the operation of ONUSAL for the period from 1 June to 30 November 1993. The General Assembly noted, inter alia, that Member States' respective share in the unutilized balance of $1,813,985 held in the ONUSAL/United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) special account for the period from 1 June to 30 November 1993 should be set off against assessments on Member States.

4. In paragraph 9 of the corrigendum to his report (A/48/842/Corr.1), the Secretary-General summarizes the actions to be taken by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session in connection with the financing of ONUSAL.

5. With regard to the future of ONUSAL beyond 31 May 1994, the Secretary-General believes "it is desirable to keep the Mission in existence, at a reduced

strength, for a further period of a few months to verify the full deployment of the National Civil Police and the phasing-out of the National Police, together with implementation of any other major points in the Peace Accords. In this regard, the Secretary-General will report to the Security Council with considered recommendations on the matter before the end of May 1994." (A/48/842, para. 16).

6. Annexes I and II to the Secretary-General's report summarize and provide supplementary information in respect of the financial performance of the operation for the period from 1 June to 30 November 1993. As indicated therein, total expenditures amounted to $16,180,200 gross ($14,699,900 net), with an unencumbered balance of $1,819,800 gross ($1,624,100 net).

7. In his report, the Secretary-General estimated the cost of the operation for the period 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994, inclusive of the cost related to the deployment of 580 election monitors, at $19,993,400 gross ($18,178,600 net). However, this estimate has since been revised, leading to a total increase of $23,600 gross but a decrease of $15,900 net for the period from 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994. The revised estimates for the same period amount to $20,017,000 gross ($18,162,700 net) (A/48/842/Corr.1, para.1). Annex III to document A/48/842/Corr.1 and annex IV to document A/48/842 provide a summary statement and supplementary information in respect of this estimate.

8. As explained in paragraphs 3, 4, 6 and 7 of the corrigendum to the Secretary-General's report, there are increases due to the deployment of 30 additional police (from 293 to 323) for the period from 1 March to 31 May 1994 ($264,500), the reinstatement of 13 P-4-level posts that were inadvertently proposed for downgrading to P-3 from 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994 ($74,700) and additional requirements under the support account ($6,300) and under staff assessment ($39,500). These increases are offset by a decrease of $361,400 under civilian electoral observers, leaving a net increase of $23,600 under the gross estimates and a net decrease of $15,900 under the net estimates.

9. The reduction of $361,400 under electoral observers is due to the application of the mission subsistence allowance rate of $68 instead of $85 in respect of the 250 electoral observers provided by the United Nations Secretariat and Member States, and the reduction of the duration of the service of the observers from 16 to 11 days and the mission subsistence allowance from $39 per day to $27 per day in connection with the 330 electoral observers provided by the United Nations agencies in El Salvador and volunteers (A/48/842/Corr.1, para.5).

10. The cost estimates for the above period provide for a total of 357 civilian staff (167 international staff and 190 local staff) and 361 military personnel (38 military observers and 323 civilian police) for the period from 1 December 1993 to 30 April 1994 and a total of 228 civilian staff (96 international staff and 132 local staff) and 62 military personnel (7 military observers and 55 civilian police) for the period from 1 to 31 May 1994 as indicated in annex VIII to the corrigendum to the report (A/48/842/Corr.1).

11. The estimates provide for a total of $22,800 for three official trips of military observers ($5,700) and civilian police ($5,700) and six trips of Chief of Mission and a senior official ($11,400) for briefing and/or consultations in New York (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, paras. 1 (a) (ii), 2 (a) (ii) and (viii)). The Advisory Committee questions the need for all these trips when the mission is nearing its final phase.

12. An amount of $104,300 has been provided for consultants (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, para. 2 (b) (iii)). Since ONUSAL is winding down, the Advisory Committee was not convinced of the explanations given in support for the estimated amount. Moreover, the Committee notes that in the previous mandate period only $21,800 was used. In the circumstances, the Advisory Committee recommends an amount of $20,000 instead of $104,300 under consultants. The corresponding reductions in the estimate for the period from 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994 would be $84,300.

13. In annex IV, section II, paragraph 2 (f) (ii) to the report (A/48/842), an amount of $500,000 has been provided for the travel of 250 electoral monitors estimated at a $2,000 round-trip per person and an additional amount of $500,000 has been set aside for the travel of the 250 electoral monitors if there is a second round of voting. The Advisory Committee understands therefore, that, should a second round of voting not be necessary, the additional requirement of $500,000 will not arise; the Advisory Committee expects that any such savings will be specifically reflected in the performance report.

14. With regard to transportation operations, the estimates provide $63,200 for the rental of 50 vehicles. This is in addition to a total of 427 vehicles that are currently in the mission area (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, para. 5 (b)). It is the view of the Advisory Committee that the total number of vehicles in the mission area is adequate and that there is no need to rent more vehicles. The corresponding reductions in the estimate for 6 months would be $63,200.

15. The Advisory Committee notes that the exercise of shipping vehicles out of ONUSAL does not start until the end of April 1994 (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, para. 5). Since the holding of the elections is scheduled for 20 March 1994, the Committee queries the rationale for keeping the entire fleet of vehicles in the mission area for the whole month of April. It is the view of the Committee that this exercise should start at the beginning and not at the end of April 1994, even allowing for a second round of presidential elections.

16. An amount of $455,000 has been provided for vehicle maintenance for 427 vehicles for 5 months and 140 vehicles for 1 month (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, para. 5 (d)). In view of its recommendation in paragraph 15 above that the shipping of vehicles out of the ONUSAL mission area should start at the beginning rather than at the end of April 1994, the Advisory Committee also recommends that the amount of $455,000 should be reduced by $55,000 to $400,000.

17. An amount of $763,800 has been provided for the support account (A/48/842, annex IV, sect. II, para. 18). Since the mission is winding down, the Advisory Committee does not believe that the entire amount of $763,800 would be required under this item. In the circumstances, the Committee recommends an amount of $500,000. The corresponding reduction in the estimate would be $273,800.

18. In view of its recommendations and observations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate for ONUSAL the amount of $19,527,000 gross ($17,672,700 net) for the period 1 December 1993 to 31 May 1994.

Compliance with past recommendations of ACABQ

19. The Advisory Committee has requested that, in the Secretary-General's future reports on the financing of ONUSAL, precise information should be given on implementation of, and/or compliance with, recommendations of ACABQ that have been endorsed by the General Assembly.